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May 2024



Issue 5

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## The scoop of the day

### May 17 is National Pack Rat Day



This is the perfect day to take a little time off and dig into closets, garages, and other storage spaces with one mission: to declutter. Hoarding can sometimes go under the radar as daily living makes it difficult to notice how many things we accumulate. Celebrate this by getting rid of the old and making space for the new!

Although the history of Pack Rat Day is not that clear, it does bring awareness to a more serious subject. Hoarding disorder is the ongoing difficulty to discard possessions regardless of their value or usefulness. People with this difficulty may sometimes feel severe anxiety and distress when having to organize or part with their possessions.

In some cases, hoarding may be a symptom of another disorder such as obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD) or obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD).

Extreme cases of hoarding result in a hindered quality of life as living spaces may also become limited by cluttering or items like newspapers, malfunctioning electronic devices, and old furniture.

Experts suggest that this disorder is not a simple one to treat. Although cleaning and organizing might help, the underlying factors that lead a person to develop such behavior mustn't be overlooked.

A differentiation must be made between hoarding and collecting. Collecting involves searching, acquiring, and organizing objects as a hobby and a source of enjoyment. While a collector will usually display their finding with pride, a hoarder may feel deep embarrassment and discomfort about their possessions.

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# CLEARING SPACE: HOW TO DECLUTTER IN AN ECO-FRIENDLY WAY

Posted by **Snow** on June 17, 2023

Everyone can relate to the realization that their home is surrounded by clutter. Clutter can creep up on you and before you know it, your home is filled with belongings you no longer have a need for. But decluttering can be bad for the environment if you don't take the time and care to consider where your items will wind up when you dispose of them. Here are some tips on how to declutter your home in an eco-friendly way that's beneficial for you and the planet.

## GET PREPARED

Preparation is key when you're decluttering, especially if you want to do so in a sustainable way. It can be tempting to just dump everything at the recycling center and feel you've done enough, but with preparation and a little research, you don't have to feel guilty. Before you start going through each room in your home, put a sorting system in place so you know where each item is going.

You might want a pile for items you want to keep, items that need repairing, those which can be reused or repurposed, a pile for items that you know you can pass on to friends, family or that you want to sell, and those which need recycling. Work out which categories work well for you and the items you have so you can ensure everything ends up in the right place.

## REPAIR ITEMS TO GIVE THEM A LONGER LIFE



Sometimes, the reason we want to get rid of things is simply that they don't work anymore and it's easier to just buy a new version. But take the time to understand what's wrong with the item in question and whether it's easy to fix. Maybe it's an item of furniture that just needs a fresh coat of paint, or a handle tightening up. Perhaps your once-favorite jacket doesn't get worn anymore because of a broken zipper. Even if you can't carry out the repair yourself, you can take it to a professional to have it fixed which will usually be cheaper than buying new.

## REPURPOSE WHERE YOU CAN

Decluttering usually involves removing products from your possession, whether you're donating them, selling them, or giving them to family and friends. But have you ever thought about repurposing those items you no longer need anymore? For example, an old t-shirt can be cut up into cleaning cloths for around the home, while old bath towels can be rolled up and sewn into a new bath mat. Repurposing items into something new gives them a fresh lease of life and prevents them from being thrown away, while still enabling you to achieve a minimalist home.



## FIND OTHER PEOPLE WITH SHARED INTERESTS

You're unlikely to be the only person interested in a particular hobby, so if you have an item to get rid of, why not find someone with a similar interest who can take it off your hands? For example, if you're a keen gardener, you might be able to find another who shares your interest who will take on your gardening tools you no longer need.

Or maybe you're a skilled photographer looking to upgrade your equipment. MPB, specialists in used photography and video equipment, found that 66% of photographers appreciate that there's no need to purchase brand new photography equipment because it's manufactured to be long-lasting, meaning there's a market for your used kit.

Their Head of Sustainability, Rachel Thompson, highlights how significant the buying and selling of used equipment is. “It’s really important to put a halo on selling used and not only buying used. When you sell used [gear], you’re really hitting that sustainability triple home run: making some money, doing good for the planet, and enabling another person to access affordable [gear].”

## SELL ON THE RIGHT PLATFORMS

Today, there are countless online platforms for selling items, and choosing the right one will ensure your belongings end up in front of the right audience. For example, if you have clothes to get rid of, instead of a broader site like eBay that sells a wide range of products, why not choose a site such as Vinted or ThredUp? People looking to thrift clothes are more inclined to choose a specialist site so choosing a company dedicated to selling the items you’re decluttering will increase your chance of selling them.

## KNOW WHAT THRIFT STORES WON’T TAKE



It’s all too easy to load up your car with your belongings and dump them at a thrift store, feeling like you’ve done your part for the planet. But it’s not necessarily the most sustainable option. There might be items that they can’t sell on or already have multiples of, which means it’s on the store’s shoulders to dispose of them.

They’re likely to still wind up in a landfill, so before you land them with items they can’t shift, get in touch to check they will take what you’re disposing of. For example, thrift stores don’t always take electrical goods and rarely take personal items like shavers, unless they’re unused and still in a sealed box. It’s also important to consider the condition of the items you’re getting rid of. If you wouldn’t want to buy the item secondhand, will someone else be willing to pay for it?

## RECYCLE WHAT YOU CAN’T SELL OR DONATE

If you can’t donate or sell the items you no longer need, make sure you recycle them properly to avoid them being sent to landfill. For example, e-waste is a significant problem and poses a huge threat to the environment, from air and water pollution to toxic chemicals seeping into our soils. So, making sure that computers and laptops, TVs, and e-readers are recycled at a proper facility will ensure that the materials can be sorted properly and repurposed into something else, and reduces the carbon footprint of your decluttering endeavors.

Decluttering can be overwhelming, but it can also be enjoyable. It is important to make sure you’re thinking about where those items are going once they leave your home. There are so many solutions for making sure that items aren’t sent to landfills, from recycling them so they can be repurposed to upcycling them yourself and selling them to others. Getting prepared and researching the options ahead of sorting out your home will ensure that each item you get rid of is disposed of in the right way.

Website: <https://www.anniebutton.co.uk/>

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Remember to come to our next meeting. Always the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at Church of the Nazarene.

Come early and share a meal with us – generously donated by our sponsors – and meet your neighbors.

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Thank you for visiting our website [www.riveroakscivicsassociation.com](http://www.riveroakscivicsassociation.com).

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